

# DAILY BULLETIN

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## CONDOLEEZZA RICE SWORN IN AS SECRETARY OF STATE

Rice will be 66th secretary of state; first African-American woman in post

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Washington - Former National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice was sworn in as the 66th U.S. secretary of state at 7:07 p.m. in a White House ceremony on January 26.

Earlier in the day, the U.S. Senate had confirmed Rice's nomination as secretary of state by a vote of 85 to 13, following nine hours of floor debate that ended January 26.

Previously, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee approved the nomination by a vote of 16-2 on January 19 and sent it to the full Senate. An immediate vote on her nomination set for January 20 was delayed after Senate Democrats indicated to the chamber's leadership they wanted an extended debate on the nomination.

Rice succeeds Colin L. Powell, a former Army general and chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and becomes the first African-American woman to serve as the nation's top diplomat.

Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, a Tennessee Republican, had predicted at the outset of debate that Rice would have "an overwhelming majority" of votes.

Debate on her nomination focused extensively on the Iraq war and Rice's role in advising President Bush on the arguments for ending the regime of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

The debate, however, coupled with the extended committee questioning, which took 11 hours over two days, gave a detailed look of the U.S. foreign policy-making process and the roles of Congress and national security advisors in policy-making.

But the two days of Senate debate fell along party lines with a number of Democrats speaking, for the most part, against her nomination and Republicans speaking in support. The outcome, however, was never in doubt.

Senator Diane Feinstein, a California Democrat, reminded the senators "a president deserves to have his selections confirmed."

Customarily and by tradition, the Senate confirms presidential Cabinet nominations without extensive debate under the long-standing belief that a president is entitled to have Cabinet officers serving him of his own choosing.

Senate Foreign Relations Chairman Richard G. Lugar, an Indiana Republican, commended the Rice nomination to the full Senate, saying, "We will be participants in an historic moment that will reaffirm the Senate's role in foreign policy and underscore the brilliance of the Constitutional design."

Rice responded to 199 questions during two days of hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee -- 129 from Democrats and 70 from Republicans. She also responded to 191 written questions.

"Thus, Dr. Rice responded to a total of 390 questions from senators. In American history, few Cabinet nominees have provided as much information or answered as many questions during the confirmation process," Lugar said. "She demonstrated that her understanding of U.S. foreign policy is comprehensive and insightful."

Senator Joseph Biden, the ranking Democratic member of the committee, offered his support of Rice's nomination, but said that he did so with some reservations, which mostly stemmed from the current U.S. policies on Iraq.

Senator Edward M. Kennedy, a Massachusetts Democrat, led off the criticism of Rice's nomination and the administration's Iraq policy overall saying, "Dr. Rice was a key member of the national security team that developed and justified the rationale for war, and it's been a catastrophic failure, a continuing quagmire. In these circumstances, she should not be promoted to secretary of state."

But Senator Joseph I. Lieberman, a Connecticut Democrat, said "what unites us around this very qualified nominee in this time of war is much greater than what divides us."

Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, a Texas Republican, said Rice is capable, trusted by the Bush administration, and has the knowledge of foreign policy from 25 years of experience.

Rice, before becoming Bush's national security advisor in 2001, served for six years as provost at Stanford University and as the school's chief budget and academic officer. She was also a professor of political science and is a specialist in Soviet affairs. She served previously in the administration of the President Bush's father on the National Security Council.

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#### IRAQIS SHOULD USE "HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY" TO VOTE, BUSH SAYS

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President warns Iran, Syria not to meddle in January 30 elections

President Bush said the January 30 elections for Iraq's national assembly are a "historic opportunity" for the Iraqi people, and he urged them to vote to "show the terrorists they cannot stop the march of freedom."

In an interview with Al Arabiya Television January 26, Bush said that sovereignty had been transferred back to Iraqis not very long ago, in June 2004. "A couple of years ago, people would have been puzzled by someone saying that the Iraqis will be given a chance to vote. And now they are," he said.

The president welcomed statements by Iraqi Shi'a leaders that called for the new Iraqi government to be inclusive of all communities, including minorities, in the country.

"[I]n order for Iraq to achieve its ultimate objective, which is a stable, free society, that everybody ought to be able to participate in the writing of the constitution, ... there needs to be respect for minority rights," he said.

The president expressed his appreciation for Iraqis who have shown courage by promoting democracy. The terrorists have no vision for the future of Iraq, he said, "unlike the people who will be elected, who will be listening to the voices of the Iraqis."

Bush warned neighboring Iran against trying to "unduly influence" the Iraqi elections through financial or other means, but said he was confident that the Iraqi people would "vote and elect people that will represent their views, [and] not the views of a foreign government."

"I'm confident that Iraqi nationalism and Iraqi pride and the history of Iraq and traditions of Iraq will be the main focus of the new government, and reflect the new government," he said.

He also said his administration and the Iraqi government have sent messages to the Syrian government that it "should not be meddling" in the country, and should "do everything they can to prevent money, arms, [and] people from going from Syria into Iraq" to destabilize it. "[W]e expect the government to act on our request," Bush said.

The president said 120,000 members of Iraqi security forces have been trained so far, but said the figure "doesn't necessarily mean they're ready."

"There's a difference between quantity and quality," he said, adding the United States would focus over the next year on quality.

"[I]t's important for the Iraqi citizens to know that their own citizens are out defending their freedom," he said, and when the Iraqi government makes a security decision, there should be "decisive and quick movement" on the part of its forces.

Turning to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the president said the election of Abu Mazen as the new president of the Palestinian Authority will "help accelerate" the road map for a two-state solution.

"I'm very optimistic about the establishment of a Palestinian state," he said. He added that most Israelis understand that "in the long-term their survival depends upon

a democratic state coexisting peacefully with Israel."

Asked if there could be a Palestinian state by 2009, Bush said he was reluctant to set a timetable, but said the United States and others in the international community are willing to "help along those lines."

"It is conceivable it could happen before then if there is that firm commitment. And it looks like there is a firm commitment," he said.

If the Palestinians "continue to follow a path toward peaceful relations and the development of a free state, where people can express their opinions and have dissent and an open press, there's a very good chance the state will happen," Bush said.

In the shorter term, the president said his new Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice is scheduled to be in London for a March conference to help the Palestinians build institutions "to show our commitment to the Palestinian cause," and said the new Palestinian Authority president is invited to visit the United States.

#### U.S. CAMPAIGN BRINGS AIDS DRUG TREATMENT TO MORE PEOPLE

Emergency plan on target to reach 200,000 people by June

In the first eight months of operation, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief has delivered anti-retroviral treatments to 155,000 people living with the disease in 15 of the world's most affected nations.

The U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator's Office (GAC - <http://www.state.gov/s/gac>) released a progress report on the \$15 billion, five-year initiative against the disease in a January 26 statement. The report reflects data compiled through September 2004 on the number of people receiving U.S.-supported treatment in the following nations: Botswana, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Guyana, Haiti, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Vietnam and Zambia. According to the GAC statement, ongoing efforts to expand treatment make the numbers even higher currently.

With the campaign expanding and better establishing itself in the target nations, the GAC reports that 200,000 people will be receiving treatment by June, one year after the program began. This progress keeps the program on track to meet a five-year goal of reaching 2 million people, according to the statement.

## U.S. DRUG AGENCY APPROVES LOW-COST, GENERIC AIDS DRUGS

Decision could open door to wider availability of drug treatment

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced January 25 that an AIDS drug manufactured in South Africa meets U.S. standards for quality, safety and efficacy.

The tentative approval means that the cheaper drug, although not eligible for sale in the United States due to patent and/or exclusivity concerns, becomes a suitable candidate for purchase with U.S. aid. Availability of less expensive drugs could allow AIDS-assistance dollars to stretch further, and thus provide treatment for more patients.

FDA review of the foreign-manufactured drug was conducted in order to ensure the drug meets quality, safety and efficacy standards. Only medicines that meet those standards are eligible for purchase with funds provided by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. Aspen Pharmacare makes the treatment, which combines three medicines in a one-dose package.

"Through an expedited review process, FDA has worked diligently to approve a product with great public health significance," said Dr. Lester Crawford, acting FDA commissioner. "Our contributions to the goals of the emergency plan are an integral part of that effort."

In a separate press statement, U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator Randall Tobias called the FDA's approval of the generic co-packaged anti-retroviral drug product made in South Africa "another step in ensuring that families throughout the world receive the same quality of drugs that we provide to our own families in the U.S."

Further information about U.S. initiatives on HIV/AIDS is available at:

<http://www.state.gov/s/gac/>

The text of the FDA press release follows:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Food and Drug Administration  
FDA News  
January 25, 2005

## FDA Grants Tentative Approval to Generic AIDS Drug Regimen for Potential Purchase Under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) today announced the tentative approval of a co-packaged antiretroviral drug regimen manufactured by Aspen Pharmacare of South Africa for the treatment of HIV-1 infection in adults. The agency's tentative approval means that although existing patents and/or exclusivity prevent U.S. marketing of Aspen's product, it meets FDA's quality, safety and efficacy standards for U.S. marketing. This action makes this product available for potential procurement by President Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.

Today's action is the first tentative approval of an HIV drug regimen manufactured by a non-U.S.-based generic pharmaceutical company. Once Aspen's marketing application was complete on January 13, 2005, FDA completed its review within two weeks.

"Today's action honors the commitment of the Department of Health and Human Services and Secretary Thompson to the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief," said Dr. Lester M. Crawford, Acting FDA Commissioner. "The goal of the emergency plan is to make safe, effective and affordable quality drugs available quickly for patients with HIV/AIDS."

"Through an expedited review process, FDA has worked diligently to approve a product with great public health significance. Our contributions to the goals of the emergency plan are an integral part of that effort," added Dr. Crawford.

The Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, which President Bush first announced in his 2003 State of the Union Address, is currently providing \$15 billion to fight the HIV/AIDS pandemic over five years, with a special focus on

15 of the hardest hit countries. It targets three specific areas related to HIV/AIDS:

- Prevention of HIV transmission;
- Treatment of AIDS and associated conditions;
- Care, including palliative care for HIV infected-individuals, and care for orphans and vulnerable children.

The tentatively approved regimen consists of co-packaged lamivudine/zidovudine fixed dose combination tablets and nevirapine tablets. Lamivudine/zidovudine fixed dose combination tablets are a version of the already approved Combivir tablets manufactured by GlaxoSmith-Kline, and nevirapine tablets are a version of Viramune tablets manufactured by Boehringer-Ingelheim. The new co-packaged product consists of two tablets (lamivudine/zidovudine and nevirapine) each to be taken twice daily, after the initial two-week initiation phase of this nevirapine regimen.

More information on HIV and AIDS is available online at FDA's Web site:

<http://www.fda.gov/oashi/aids/hiv.htm>

